

Merle's notes from Senior Advocate Isobel Mackenzie's Town Hall meeting in Penticton 4/22/2015:

- Website: [www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca](http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca)
- 1-877-952-3181 – where a real person will answer
- Under Reports & Publications:
  - Together We Can Do Better – Oct. 2014
  - Bridging the Gaps – Mar. 2015
  - Placement, Drugs, Therapy Report – Apr. 2015
  - Housing – due for publication on 20 May 2015
- 17% of the BC population over 65
- will probably stabilize at around 25%
- 3.75% in residential care
- Two-thirds of seniors over 85 are not getting public care
- 27,000 public beds in BC; 6,500 private beds
- Of those 65+ the median income is \$24,500
- 15,000 are living on \$16,000 or less
- OAS is clawed back at the \$125,000 income level
- Elder poverty is often invisible because people are house-bound
- While touring the province, Ms. Mackenzie says housing is the #1 issue of concern
- Transportation is also of great concern – to medical care and accommodation when mobility issues are present
- Fragmentation of transportation services is also of concern
- Caregiver burnout requires measures for respite at times
- Ageism is very apparent – people often don't listen to elders or negate their concerns without assessing the level of risk tolerance elders are willing to have; decisions are often made without their input
- *Being Mortal* is a book that details ways seniors are not respected – e.g. if they lose their accustomed home, they lose control of their lives and are in the power of those who think they know better how seniors should be living
- The Seniors Advocate office sends information (the aforementioned reports and press releases) to the media and all MLAs
- There is assistance for Prov. Health Care premiums for seniors with income under \$22,000
- 876,000 BC residents 65+
- Seniors shouldn't have to apply to various aid programs annually; the key is to make sure they file income tax EVERY year on time
- Campus of Care concept – from apartments to assisted living to residential care; need individual living separate from this
- Only 15% of seniors over 85 go to residential care
- Planning a Residential Experience Report in 2016
- Key issue: access to information – especially for low-income seniors
- Fragmented specialized care is not necessarily good for seniors – need more generalists for realistically handling the physical and emotional needs of elders without inappropriate regimens of specialized care
- Yes, the Office of the Seniors Advocate is aware of issues relating to lives of LGBT elders
- Self-neglect judgment by outsiders is often leveled against seniors and they're classified under Section 22 of the Mental Health Act
- 11% of seniors over 65 are still working